



Mood Stabilizing Medications

There is a whole list of mood stabilizers, and they are all slightly different. Medical professionals group these drugs together because they help to stabilize mood and prevent, manage or reduce depressive and manic episodes in people with bipolar disorder. The effectiveness, side-effects and recommended doses of these drugs vary, and many people want to explore their options before committing to a course of treatment. Here is a mood stabilizers medication list, as well as some important facts about each medication.

The Complete Mood Stabilizers List

There is a long list of mood stabilizers, and what is right for one person may not be right for another. Three types of medications fall into the category of mood stabilizers: minerals, anticonvulsants and antipsychotics.

Mineral Mood Stabilizers

[Lithium](#) is commonly used to treat depression and mania in bipolar disorder. It was approved by the FDA in 1970 and is still used in a number of cases today. It can be prescribed alone or along with other medications that treat bipolar disorder.

Commercial brand names for lithium medicines include Eskalith, Lithobid and Lithonate. Lithium is highly effective when used to stabilize mood, but it can cause side-effects.

These include:

- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Tremor
- Weight gain
- Confusion
- Diarrhea

High levels of lithium in the blood can be dangerous, so doctors will routinely monitor your health via blood tests if you take lithium medications.

Anticonvulsant Mood Stabilizers

Anticonvulsants are commonly prescribed to patients with epilepsy, but they are also highly effective at reducing the severity and frequency of bipolar episodes. There is a long list of mood stabilizers in this category, but commonly prescribed medicines include:

- Valproate/valproic acid ([Depakote](#), [Depakene](#))
- [Lamotrigine \(Lamictal\)](#)
- [Carbamazepine](#) (Carbatrol, Tegretol, Epitol, Equetro)

The following anticonvulsants are sometimes used “off-label,” meaning they are not officially approved for the treatment of bipolar disorder, but they are approved for

other purposes. Doctors can prescribe off-label medications for the benefit of a patient's care.

- Oxcarbazepine (Oxtellar, Trileptal)
- [Gabapentin](#) (Horizant, Neurontin)
- [Topiramate](#) (Qudexy, Topamax, Trokendi)

Common side-effects of anticonvulsants are similar to those of lithium, but they may also include headaches, sexual problems, abdominal pain, fever, confusion, blurred vision and abnormal bruising and bleeding.

Antipsychotic Mood Stabilizers

Antipsychotics are another medication type on the mood stabilizers list. In some cases, they are prescribed alone, but they may also be taken with other mood stabilizing drugs. Medications in this category that are approved for the treatment of bipolar disorder include

- [Aripiprazole \(Abilify\)](#)
- [Asenapine \(Saphris\)](#)
- [Olanzapine \(Zyprexa\)](#)
- [Risperidone \(Risperdal\)](#)
- [Quetiapine \(Seroquel\)](#)
- [Ziprasidone \(Geodon\)](#)
- [Lurasidone \(Latuda\)](#)

Antipsychotic medications can cause side-effects. These may include:

- Tremors
- Blurred vision
- Weight gain
- Dizziness
- Rapid heartbeat
- Sensitivity to sunlight

All side-effects should be reported to your doctor. If you experience swelling of the hands or face, difficulty breathing, body rash or irregular heart rhythms, you should seek medical assistance immediately. Some drugs on the mood stabilizers medication list can also cause adverse mood symptoms, such as suicidal thoughts and behavior, hallucinations and problems with memory. If any of these occur, it's important to seek immediate medical advice.

Which Drug on the Mood Stabilizers Medication List Should I Choose?

If you are diagnosed with bipolar disorder, your doctor will examine your symptoms, medical history, allergies, intolerances and other general health factors to determine which course of treatment is right for you. You may need to try different medications from the mood stabilizers list to determine which works best.

During this time, it's important to meet with your doctor regularly to report any side-effects and see how well your treatment is working. Your doctor can then make periodic adjustments to your medication to keep your side-effects and symptoms under careful management.